AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method of navigating a business application software using a computer system having a central processing unit, a display device coupled to said central processing unit, and a transactional database comprising a main database containing records of business transactions entered on a line item basis ~~containing business information~~ according to and including the dimensions of Items, People, Actions and Time, said method comprising:

simultaneously displaying ~~icons~~ on said display device via a graphical user interface four icons that separately ~~representing~~ identify the categories of Items, People, Actions, and Results;

accessing through selection of any of said icons information contained in ~~the software application or~~ said database which is ~~related to~~ in the category represented by ~~said any~~ the selected icon; and

displaying the accessed information via a screen display specific to the ~~said any~~ selected icon.

2. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein said icons are displayed on a ~~substantially~~ continuous basis under control of a graphical user interface program.

3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 comprising accessing and/or altering through the Items icon any information contained in ~~the software application or~~ said database which is related to selected physical or non-physical elements, including but not limited to products, parts, assets, services and other physical or non-physical resources.

4. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, comprising accessing and/or altering through the People icon any information

contained in ~~the software application or~~ said transactional database which is related to real people, including but not limited to customers, prospects, vendors, suppliers, employees, contractors, or transportation agents.

5. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, comprising accessing and/or altering through the Actions icon any information contained in ~~the software application or its~~ said transactional database which is related to activities performed within an organization or between the organization and its external business partners, including but not limited to quotations, orders, picks, invoices, credit checks, and return authorizations.

6. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, comprising accessing through the Results icon summaries of data contained in ~~the software application or its~~ said transactional database, whether in graphical, tabular or text form, whether on screen, on a file, or in print.

7. (currently amended) A method of simplifying interaction between a user and a computer system having a central processing unit coupled to a display device and a transactional database containing records of business transactions entered on a line item basis according to ~~data representative of~~ the dimensions of items, people, actions and time, said method comprising:

simultaneously displaying icons on said display device that separately identify and represent the categories of ~~representing~~ items, people, actions, and results;

accessing and/or altering through selection of any of said icons any business transaction data contained in the database which is related to the dimensions identified and represented by ~~said any~~ the selected icon; and

displaying the accessed and altered business transaction data via a screen display specific to the dimension identified by said any icon.

8. (currently amended) An information handling apparatus comprising:

a computer system having a central processing unit and a display device coupled to said central processing unit;

a transactional database containing~~, on a line item basis,~~ records of business transactions recorded on a line item basis according to and including data in at least the following dimensions: items, people, actions and time; and

a graphical user interface coupled to said computer system comprising (a) means for causing said display device to display four icons that separately identify ~~representing~~ the dimensions of items, people, actions and results, (b) means for accessing through selection of any one of said icons data contained in said database, and (c) means for managing the accessed data according to algorithms contained in the software and workflows defined by the user.~~.~~

9. (currently amended) An information handling apparatus comprising:

a computer system having a central processing unit and a display device coupled to said central processing unit;

a transactional database containing records of business transactions recorded, on a line item basis, data according to and including ~~in~~ at least the following dimensions: items, people, actions and time; and

a graphical user interface coupled to said computer system comprising (a) means for causing said display device to display icons representing the dimensions of items, people, actions and results, and (b) means operative through selection of any of said icons for accessing data contained in said database and managing the accessed data according to specific workflows related to the dimension represented by said any selected icon.

10. (currently amended) An information handling apparatus comprising:

a central processing unit;

a display device coupled to said central processing unit;

a transactional data base coupled to said central processing unit for storing business transaction data relating to and including at least items, people, actions and time on a line item basis;

software defining a scheme for managing and processing said data and for generating results according to selected workflows; and

a graphical user interface characterized by (1) means for causing said displace device to display separate icons as metaphors for the following categories: items, people, actions and results, means responsive to selection of any of said icons for generating ~~and to generate separate screens~~ a separate screen for use in accessing and processing data on the basis of the category ~~basis~~ of items, people, actions ~~and~~ or results represented by the selected icon, and (2) means for causing said software to display data according to said scheme on the basis of items, people, actions or results.

11. (currently amended) An information handling apparatus comprising:

a computer system having a central processing unit and a display device coupled to said central processing unit;

a transactional database containing business data that has been recorded~~, on a line item basis, data in at least~~ on a line item basis and includes all of the following dimensions: items, people, actions and time; and

a graphical user interface coupled to said computer system comprising (a) means for causing said display device to display icons representing the categories of items, people, actions and results, ~~and~~ (b) means responsive to selection of any of said icons for accessing said business data according to the category of items, people, actions or results

identified by the selected icon, and (c) means responsive to selection of any of said icons for accessing specific software and managing and processing data contained in said database according to said accessed specific software.

12. (Original) An information handling apparatus according to claim 11 wherein said specific software defines a workflow.

13. (Original) An information handling apparatus according to claim 12 wherein said specific software comprises a first database table that defines types of actions to be executed by said computer system and a second database table that defines possible links between said action types.

14. (Original) An information handling apparatus according to claim 13 wherein said specific software comprises a third database table that contains a record of links between actions that have been executed or are planned for execution.

15. (currently amended) An information handling apparatus comprising:

a computer system having a central processing unit and a display device coupled to said central processing unit;

a transactional database comprising a central database containing, on a line item basis, data in at least the following dimensions: items, people, actions and time; and

a graphical user interface coupled to said computer system comprising (a) means for causing said display device to display icons representing items, people, actions and results, and (b) software defining a schema for managing data contained in said transactional database according to specific workflows accessed by selection of one of said icons.

16. (currently amended) A graphical user interface for accessing data of business transactions stored in a computer system that includes a display device, said data being stored on a line item basis in a transactional database according to the dimensions of items, people, actions and time, said interface comprising (a) means for causing said display device to display icons representing the dimensions of items, people, actions and results, (b) means for accessing through selection of any one of said icons data contained in said transactional database, and (c) means for managing the accessed data.

17. (Original) A graphical user interface according to claim 16 wherein said graphical user interface is adapted to provide four separate screens, one each for Items, People, Actions and Results, with each of said screens displaying all of said icons.

18. (currently amended) A graphical user interface according to claim 17 wherein each of said separate screens includes one or more tabs or buttons that represent options available to the user with respect to accessing or processing data.

19. (currently amended) An information handling apparatus comprising:

a computer system having a central processing unit and a display device coupled to said central processing unit;

a transactional database comprising a central database containing, on a line item basis, data in at least the following dimensions: items, people, actions and time; ~~and~~

a schema involving user-defined actions and links between actions for managing data contained in said database according to specific workflows; and

a graphical user interface coupled to said computer system comprising means for causing said display device to display a screen containing icons representing the dimensions of items, people, actions and results, and means operative through selection of any of said icons for accessing data contained in said database and managing the accessed data according to said user defined actions and said links between actions.

20. (Withdrawn) A method of defining a workflow in a computer system comprising establishing a first database table that lists and defines different action types, a second database table that lists and defines possible links between action types, and a third database table that maintains a record of the links between actual actions as they have occurred or as they are planned to occur.

21. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 20 wherein said links establish the order of executing selected actions and/or the conditions to be met for an action to be executed.

22. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 20 wherein said action types include a purchase requisition action and a purchase order action, and said second database table contains a link between said purchase requisition action and said purchase order action that establishes the order of executing those actions.

23. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 20 wherein said action types include a customer order action, an approved acceptance of order action, an issue shipping order action, and an issue invoice action, and said second database table contains separate and specific links between action types that establish the order of executing said action types and/or the conditions to be met for each action type to be executed.

24. (New) A method according to claim 1 wherein said transactional database further includes a plurality of secondary databases, including an Items database containing records of information about Items, a People database containing records of information about People, (iv) an Actions database containing records of types of available Actions, and (v) a fourth Time database containing records relating to Time, said four icons are displayed on a start-up screen, and further wherein information contained in said main database is accessed by accessing additional Items, People, Actions and Results screens via said icons, with each of said Items, People and Actions screens having means for permitting input and changes of information in said database and tabs for accessing others of said additional screens.

25. (New) A method according to claim 24 further wherein said information contained in said main database is accessed via a link with one of said secondary databases additional databases, and said secondary databases are accessed by said Items, People, Actions and Results screens.

26. (New) An information handling system according to claim 15 wherein said transactional database further includes a plurality of secondary databases, including an Items database containing records of information about Items, a People database containing records of information about People, (iv) an Actions database containing records of types of available Actions, and (v) a fourth Time database containing records relating to Time, and said graphical user interface comprises means for accessing said secondary databases via selection of said icons.

27. (New) An information handling system according to claim 19 wherein said transactional database further includes a plurality of secondary databases, including an Items database containing records of information about Items, a People database containing records of information about People, (iv) an Actions database containing records of types of available Actions, and (v) a fourth Time database containing records relating to Time, and said graphical user interface comprises means for accessing said secondary databases through selection of said icons.